

## **Superstudio: Life Without Objects**

**November 20 – January 31, 2003**

Pratt Manhattan Gallery

144 West 14th Street, 2nd Floor

Tuesday – Friday, 10:30 AM - 5:30 PM

Saturday 12:00 to 5:00 PM

212.647.7778

**November 20 – December 19**

Artists Space

38 Greene Street, 3rd Floor

Tuesday – Saturday, 11 AM - 6 PM

212.966.1434

**November 20 – December 19**

Storefront for Art and Architecture

97 Kenmare Street

Tuesday – Saturday, 11 AM – 6 PM

212.431.5795

Pratt Manhattan Gallery, Artists Space and Storefront for Art and Architecture will jointly present *Superstudio: Life Without Objects*, an exhibition on the work of Superstudio, the radical Italian design group at the forefront of avant-garde architecture during the late 1960s and 1970s.

Founded in Florence in 1966 by Cristiano Toraldo di Francia, Alessandro and Roberto Magris, Piero Frassinelli and Adolfo Natalini; Superstudio articulated the intellectual crisis of modernism by creating subversive and provocative visions of the future, along with other alternative Italian design groups of the time such as Archizoom and Gruppo 9999. Superstudio disbanded in 1978; however, their work continues to have an enduring impact on contemporary architects and designers.

Central to Superstudio's work was its disillusionment with the modernist ideal that enlightened architecture could solve mounting social, cultural and environmental problems. Superstudio playfully envisioned a world in which people would inhabit neutral spaces devoid of the unnecessary objects prescribed by capitalism.


~~Curated in collaboration with members of Superstudio;~~ the exhibition revisits their work and ideology through photo-montages, films, story boards, sketches and furniture drawn from the group's archive. *Superstudio: Life Without Objects* is the first exhibition in New York City devoted solely to their work. Superstudio was featured in the exhibition "Italy: The New Domestic Landscape" curated by Emilio Ambasz at The Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1972. Their work is in the permanent collection at The Museum of Modern Art, New York and The Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

A catalog, by the same title, is the first book on Superstudio to be published in English, by Skira in Milan,

*Superstudio: Life Without Objects* is co-curated by Peter Lang and William Menking, with the members of Superstudio. The exhibition was first presented at the Design Museum in London, England and organized to travel internationally by James Peto, head of exhibitions at the Design Museum.

Related Events:

Press Preview



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2018 with funding from  
Storefront for Art and Architecture

[https://archive.org/details/200311\\_superstud00pete\\_0](https://archive.org/details/200311_superstud00pete_0)

22.10.03

## PRATT GALLERY

ORIGINAL DRAWINGS

ISTOGRAMMI 30

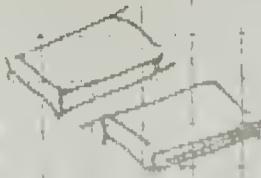
1966-69

VIAGGIO NELLE REGIONI

ISTOGRAMMI

CATALOGO DI VILLE

MONUMENTO LOMBARDO



001 212.966 0533

## ARTIST'S WORK

ORIGINAL DRAWINGS

OBJECTS WITH ARCHITECTURE

TABLET

1969-1978

12 IDEAL CITIES

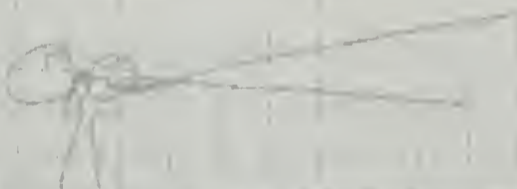
FUNDAMENTAL ARTS

ALTRA MANIERA

FIGURES



REMOVED  
FROM NY?



## STORE/ROOM

DIGITAL PRINTS (CARTOONS) FROM SCENARIOS CLASSES

FIGURES (?)



SUPERSTUDIO: Life Without Objects  
Exhibition Proposal  
Fall 2003  
Pratt Manhattan Center

ORIGINATING INSTITUTIONS:

Design Museum in London  
Pratt Institute

Curators: William Menking, New York  
Peter Lang, London

Assistants: Sarah Deyong, [sjdeyong@princeton.edu](mailto:sjdeyong@princeton.edu)

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Aelred Dean, Assistant to the Dean, 718-399-4304, [ddean@pratt.edu](mailto:ddean@pratt.edu).  
William Menking, [wmenking@hotmail.com](mailto:wmenking@hotmail.com).

DESCRIPTION OF WORK:

In the wake of the profound social unrest and transformation that spread through the industrialized world in the 1960's cultural producers sought new approaches and attitudes that would reflect the contemporary condition. In the world of design-architecture, product design, urban planning etc. many of the most creative cultural experiments were carried out in the academies, studios and workshops of Italy. This exhibition highlights the design work of Superstudio the most influential of the groups living and working in Florence, the center of Italian experimental design in the period.

A legend in architecture and design circles during the late 1960s and 1970s, Superstudio is equally influential today. By rebelling against the intellectual crisis of the modern movement and questioning the role of design in a saturated consumer culture, Cristiano Toraldo di Francia, Alessandro and Roberto Magris, Piero Frassinelli, Adolfo Natalini and other members of the Superstudio group established themselves as the forerunners of later Italian avant garde design movements such as Studio Alchymia and Memphis, as well as contemporary figures from Rem Koolhaas to Foreign Office Architects. Superstudio participated in the landmark at the Museum of Modern Art in New York 'Italy: the New Domestic Landscape' (1972) Superstudio, Archizoom, UFO etc. It is these groups as the MoMA catalogue put in that "expand(ed) the traditional concern for the aesthetic object to embrace also a concern for the aesthetic of the uses to which the object will be put. Curated in collaboration with the Superstudio collective, this exhibition will explore its ideas and innovations through photo-collages, storyboards, films, sketches, sculptures and furniture taken from the group's archive.

CATALOGUES:

The curators will produce a full color catalogue in Italian and English published by SKIRA Press from Milan, Italy. We would expect that each of the venues for Life Without Objects would commit to purchase a number of these catalogues. The catalogue will be published for the opening of the exhibition in London. The participating institutions will be credited in the catalogue.



#### VENUES:

The exhibition will open at the Design Museum in London, England on March 1, 2003 and will travel to venues in Europe and America and possibly Australia and Japan. The show is committed to being shown at the Williamson Gallery of the Art Center in Pasadena and the Power Station in Toronto, Canada. In New York City the exhibit will be staged at Pratt Institute and Artists Space in SOHO. The curators are seeking one more venue in the United States before it leaves North America. In addition it would be expected that Universities in the cities where the exhibition is displayed would sponsor symposiums on the period that would feature its major figures, critics and protagonists.

#### EXHIBITION TIME LINE:

The Design Museum in London will open the exhibit on March 1, 2003 and would ideally then move to New York City and on to California and then Canada. It would be ideal for the exhibition to open first in New York City and then to travel to California, Canada and back to Europe. It will likely conclude its exhibition life at the Olivetti Foundation gallery in Rome, Italy in 2004.

#### EXHIBITION FORMAT AND COSTS IN LONDON:

The exhibition is 200 drawings mounted to the wall under sheets of plexiglass. The drawings can be shipped in a single box. The primary objects are three to four pieces of furniture including the curved plexiglass lamp. Under negotiation is the large, floor mounted conceptual piece titled "Istogramma", a provocative and powerful piece. The Design Museum is asking from each venue \$12,000 to cover curating and shipping.

The exhibition opening would include a symposium event, possibly the day after the actual event. Two to three of the artists would need airfare from Italy and hotel rooms for three days. Other costs might include honoraria for the two outside moderators. These costs may be approximately \$10,000.

As noted above, each venue would have to purchase a number of catalogues.

